GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS

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THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

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General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

Contents for Week of October 13, 1930. Vol. IX. No. 13.

NOTE TO TEACHERS.—This is the first issue of the Geographic News Bulletins for the school year, 1930-31. No Bulletins were issued during the summer vacation months.

1. Buenos Aires, Largest City South of the Equator.
2. The Geography of the World's Weather.
3. Damascus, World's Oldest City, made Capital of Newest Republic.
4. Around the World at the Equator.
5. The Garden of Bombay, Scene of Ghandi's March to the Sea.

See Important Notice Following Bulletin No. 5.

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A YOUNG LADY OF SYRIA
(See Bulletin No. 3)

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

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Buenos Aires, Largest City South of the Equator

BUENOS AIRES, most populous city south of the Equator, a metropolis with as many citizens as Philadelphia, recently witnessed stirring scenes when the Argentine government changed hands.

Buenos Aires, as it appeared to an American visitor a few weeks ago, is described by Frederick Simpich, leader of a photographic expedition of the National Geographic Society, which conducted a survey of the new air route from Washington, D. C., through the West Indies and around the east coast of South America.

"Fly 8,500 miles south from New York, along new-blazed seaplane paths that hug the Western Hemisphere," writes Mr. Simpich. "Turn into the vast, muddy mouth of the La Plata River—in South America—and fly 150 miles upstream. There is glittering Buenos Aires, one of the most remarkable cities ever built.

More Important to Argentina Than Any American City to United States

"No city in the United States is so important to us as Buenos Aires is to Argentina. It handles four-fifths of all Argentina's trade and houses 20 per cent of all the nation's 10,000,000 inhabitants. All its 2,000,000 people are either Europeans or of European descent. In these respects it is comparable to only one other Latin American city—Montevideo in Uruguay.

"Three times as big as Spain's largest city, modern Buenos Aires—as expanded and rebuilt in the last thirty years—is conspicuous in all the world for its magic growth.

"The whole 25,000-mile railway system of Argentina has its focus here. No great motor highways radiate from the city because the vast pampas afford no roadmaking materials. But by rail and river Buenos Aires handles more than half as much freight as the port of New York, and the net tonnage of ships calling each year is equal to all that passes through the Panama Canal.

"Not trade alone makes it great. Its social, artistic and political attractions rank it among the world's most dazzling capitals. To it flock the rich, the influential, the *intelligentsia* of all Argentina. 'Our country as a whole would develop faster,' said a prominent banker, 'if more of our best brains would stay in the provinces.'

Where "Talkies" Are "Peliculas Parlantes"

"And as melons and oranges rush to our East from California and Florida, so Argentina's fruits flow into Buenos Aires. Its citizens live well. Trainloads of fresh grapes come from the famed vineyards of Mendoza, and many reach our own markets. New York is at one end, Buenos Aires at the other, of a busy trade route. Now both sea and sky ships serve it. And ships are 'Ceaseless shuttles weaving the fabric of international commerce and good will.' Mutual trade has brought huge American investments to Buenos Aires, notably in packing houses, public utilities and banks. Two Yankee concerns alone control more than 100 light and power units in Argentina. Here, too, you see the new policy of great American corporations applied, by which now their Argentine employees are encouraged to become stockholders.

"Youth, vitality, sheer enjoyment of living—they are the attributes of Buenos

Photograph from Major H. A. Dargue, © National Geographic Society

PART OF THE CITY OF BUENOS AIRES AS THE ARRIVING AIRPLANE TRAVELER SEES IT

Past the great grain elevators and marble palaces of Buenos Aires, millions of European immigrants have entered to raise wheat and Argentine cattle that help feed the world. As much shipping enters the port of Buenos Aires annually as passes through the Panama Canal (See Bulletin No. 1).

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The Geography of the World's Weather

THE importance of climate has been impressed on the minds of millions of Americans by the severe summer drought in the Central and Middle Atlantic States.

Electric fans, city water supplies, artificially cooled buildings, and deep wells often seem weak weapons for civilization to fight the onslaught of record dry weather and record heat.

Droughts are probably the most obvious of the weather forces that affect economic conditions. A sufficiently prolonged dry spell in the United States, in Argentina, or in Canada or Australia during the crucial season, can not only start the price of grain soaring locally, but it can send world prices up. Similarly, generous showers that provide favorable growing conditions in the cotton fields of Texas, or dry, hot winds that sear and stunt billions of plants in a few days, depress or raise the cotton quotations in Liverpool as quickly as the weather news can be flashed there. Extreme droughts, too, can cause millions of dollars' loss in destroyed crops and starved live stock.

Early Freeze Costly to Great Lakes Shipping

An unexpected freeze-up on the Great Lakes two weeks ahead of time may cause hundreds of thousands of dollars of loss in trapped boats and unmoved cargoes. A single extraordinary blizzard in a great city can throw a painful strain on the municipal treasury and can reduce unemployment over night.

City budgets are continually feeling the heavy hand of weather vagaries. Wind storms which blow down shade trees may cost a municipality thousands of dollars for debris removal. Rain storms and floods wash up paving and clog sewer mains. Summer droughts and hot periods increase tremendously the use of water, necessitating extra pumping. Water shortages develop in many cities so that rationing becomes necessary, along with extra police activity to enforce the restrictions.

Some American cities are fortunate enough to have unlimited supplies of water close at hand and to be wholly independent of weather changes. Even the worst of known droughts could not reduce the supplies of St. Louis and New Orleans, taken from the Mississippi River; or those of Milwaukee, Cleveland, Buffalo and Chicago, taken from the Great Lakes. The question of limiting the amount of Lake Michigan water taken by Chicago depends not on the city water supply but on waters taken from the lake by the Chicago Drainage Canal.

Weather Conditions May Affect Dividend

Cities which do not have a large supply of water close at hand, but which have made themselves independent of weather by artificially taking mountain ranges into their watersheds, include New York City, with its conduits to the Catskills; San Francisco, with its supply from the mountains above Yosemite Valley; and Los Angeles, which has reached out 250 miles to bring its water across deserts and mountains from the high Sierras.

Corporations, too, feel the economic effects of abnormal weather. Railways in certain regions must operate expensive snow plows in winter and must bear the expense of replacing bridges and tracks washed out by spring floods. Tele-

Aires. Shiny new motor cars; fascinating, Paris-like shop windows; arc lights glaring on well-dressed midnight crowds in brilliant Calle Florida; cafes, casinos, high-priced restaurants and hotels, all packed with chattering, laughing people. Then there are numerous places of amusement, including the great Grecian Colon theater; and, on billboards, many names familiar to Broadway: Tito Schipa, Chaliapin, Spinelli, Mistinguette. *'Peliculas Parlantes,'* they call the 'talkies.'

Argentina Needs the Immigrants That Come in Droves

"And still it grows. Here lands the immigrant stream. Bearded men in boots, carrying bundles; wondering boys and girls, chattering in strange Slav or Latin tongues; bewildered mothers, their heads wrapped in shawls, hard-handed women bent from work, carrying babies and still more bundles—you see them all come slowly down gangplanks from European ships to stand a bit on the busy wharf and stare at Buenos Aires. Argentina needs these. She has one-third as much land as the United States, but only as many people as live in and about New York City. Or about one and one-third per square mile, as against 490 in the British Isles.

"Italians, English, Spanish, French, Germans, Swiss, Americans, all mingle. So cosmopolitan is the city that its great papers, *La Nacion* and *La Prensa,* must serve news from everywhere. Their circulation is enormous; their advertising huge. The quality, completeness and accuracy of what they print challenge the thought of every visiting journalist. Their absorbing Sunday rotogravures, their feature articles on sport, travel, international affairs, science, literature and art, many by world famous writers, astonish the newcomer. Then he reflects; this is a great world city. It thinks like any other; and acts as Paris does, or Berlin, or New York.

Football, Subways, Children Riding Llamas

"Italian workmen with power drills tear up good pavements. New buildings rise higher, and higher. Air students stunt at Palomar Field, and Yankee free-lance flyers come peddling new planes. A man in fancy gaucho dress, as obsolete now as old-time Wild West cowboy gear, coils a live snake about his neck and hawks patent medicines. A communist tries to harangue a crowd, and police lead him amiably away. Children ride tame llamas in the parks. A weazened little man struggles through traffic with a huge basket of coconuts and offers them to a world which seems to spurn coconuts.

"Around the great *Diagonal* of the financial center grim, towering banks suggest Wall Street. Subways, long suburban trains, screaming newsboys, 50,000 football fans jammed before a loudspeaker on Avenida de Mayo—you see this is a city—greatest in South America. Its fog suggests San Francisco. Its flat expanse is like Chicago. The vast plains beyond, with endless leagues of corn, wheat and cattle, conjure up Kansas or the Illinois prairies. And mules! Fat, with good harness, they compete with trucks. You see a team draw aside to let a luxurious motor lorry pass, hauling glistening race horses out to the track of the Jockey Club. An unusual organization this is. Its downtown club-house, gorgeous as a Senate chamber, dominates all other. No club is so exclusive. Its library is famous. Here, when races are over, owners may switch their minds from horses to history, from jockeys to jurisprudence."

See also: "Buenos Aires and Its River of Silver," *National Geographic Magazine,* October, 1921.

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Damascus, World's Oldest City, Made Capital of Newest Republic

THE oldest city in the world becomes the newest capital by the recent French proclamation creating the Republic of Syria.

Damascus, 4,000 years old, will be the seat of the new government which is a successor to the proud Kingdom of Assyria, a name linked with dread and terror in the Old Testament.

France has carved the Republic of Syria out of the Syrian Mandate granted her by the League of Nations. In creating the republic, France has followed in the footsteps of Great Britain. Out of the Palestine-Transjordan and Iraq mandates Britain created the Kingdom of Transjordan and the Kingdom of Iraq.

Religion Draws Political Boundaries in Syria

The Republic of Syria has been created seven years after the establishment by France of the first republic in her Syrian Mandate, that of the Lebanese Republic, which incloses the famous mountains of Liban or Lebanon and runs down to the Mediterranean shore. The new republic, with its capital at the ancient Moslem center of Damascus, includes by no means all of the area of the mandate. In addition to omitting the Lebanese Republic it also excludes the State of the Alaouites, and the State of Jebel Druze, mountain home of the fiery Druze tribesmen, the Unitarians of Islam.

Religion draws the political boundaries in the Syrian Mandate. The independence of the Alaouites and the Druzes is recognized because each has its own religious creed. The new Syrian Republic and the Lebanese Republic also represent a Moslem republic and a Christian republic, respectively.

Four religious states in an area no larger than Georgia still leave many creeds unrecognized. To provide for all of them would require cutting Syria up into more pieces than Blue Beard ever chopped his wives.

Both Christians and Moslems Divided by Many Creeds

Syria's creeds and peoples are woven of many human odds and ends. Three-fourths of the population of 2,000,000 are Mohammedans, but part of them are Sunnites and part Shiites, and as different in point of view as Catholics and Protestants. Then there are the Alaouites whose secret religion is believed to be halfway between Mohammedanism and Christianity, and the Druzes who usually attend the Unitarian Church when they emigrate to the United States, and the heretical Ismailis, who were the original Assassins of Crusader times.

Christians in Syria are even more divided. Most numerous are the Maronite Christians in the Lebanon, but there are also Greek Catholics, Armenian Catholics, Syrian Christians, Chaldeans and Latins, not to speak of Greek Orthodox, Gregorian Armenian, and Protestants of various sects.

Because it is the custom to vote and fight as one worships in Syria, the problem of bringing governmental order out of the racial and religious melee has been colossal.

Syria, at the eastern end of the Mediterranean, finds itself wedged between Turkey and Palestine and with its back against Iraq and desert Arabia. Heavier rains give agriculture a better chance in Syria than in Palestine, so calmer political

graph and telephone companies may lose hundreds of miles of wire and thousands of dollars by a single ice storm.

A Few Things a Drought Can Do

Droughts steal away the potential power of hydro-electric plants and entail the switching in of expensive coal-burning generating stations. In the western and southern oil fields abnormally dry weather may cause stoppage of drilling in scores of wells or may greatly increase the expense of continuing operations. Timber corporations lose heavily by the forest fires that sweep huge areas during dry spells.

Unusual weather conditions change the habits of millions of people. Extremely hot days and nights reduce the patronage of ordinary indoor amusement places and crowd those artificially cooled. Hundreds of thousands of people turn to outdoor pastimes that involve little activity, such as miniature golf and night baseball. Other hundreds of thousands within reach of beaches and swimming pools crowd to them, diverting large expenditures from city theaters, restaurants, grocery and delicatessen stores, to the lunch counters, amusement booths, and novelty stores of the resorts.

See also: "The Warfare on Our Eastern Coast," *National Geographic Magazine*, September, 1913; and "Toilers of the Sky: Tenuous Clouds Perform the Mighty Task of Shaping the Earth and Sustaining Terrestrial Life," August, 1925. The latter article is accompanied by a series of cloud pictures which enable the reader to recognize and understand various cloud formations.

Bulletin No 2, October 13, 1930.

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THE TORNADO: WEATHER IN ONE OF ITS UGLIEST MOODS

When a writhing, black serpentine cloud forms, it means grave danger for those below. The formation really is a huge suction tube that picks up trees and stones and man and most of his works as easily as a vacuum cleaner sucks up grains of dust and wisps of lint. The tornado pictured above passed close to the State Capitol of Texas at Austin.

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Around the World at the Equator

WHAT would you see if you took a trip around the world at the Equator? What kind of clothes would you carry?

Many surprises are in store for the adventurer who would attempt this journey, which has never been made.

Here are a few facts which would have to be taken into account:

Snow falls within sight of the Equator,

The Equator crosses no deserts,

The Equator does not touch continental Asia,

Less than one-fourth of the Equator traverses land.

Snow-Capped Mountains Lie on the Equator

The Equator cuts Africa nearly in half, traversing the middle section of Kenya, severing the northern third from the Belgian Congo and bisecting the tongue of French Equatorial Africa.

In the 2,300 miles across Equatorial Africa there are no deserts but torrid jungles, some parts of which are so canopied by trees interlaced by vines that only pencil-like rays of sunshine penetrate. In this region the traveler meets with naked, black, kinky-haired tribesmen, and such unfriendly beasts as wild elephants, lions, and hippopotamuses.

Mount Ruwenzori and near-by peaks of Uganda offer a respite from the heat. Mount Ruwenzori, close to the Equator, is snow-capped, and from its summit the traveler looks down upon thick jungle growth, penetrable in many places only with the aid of an ax. Just below Ruwenzori's western slope is the home of the Bambute pygmies, shy, diminutive folk of the jungles. The Masai, among the world's fiercest natives, inhabit the regions to the east of the mountain.

Mouth of the Amazon River on the Equator

Between the Atlantic coast of Africa and the coast of South America, the Equator crosses no land. In the mouth of the Amazon, the world's imaginary "hot line" traverses Mexiana Island and then plunges into 2,000 miles of forest as impenetrable as the jungles of Africa.

Equatorial South America is the land of Indians of yellowish and reddish hues with straight hair which is cut as though soup bowls had been applied to the natives' heads as guides for barbers' scissors. The largest animal is the tapir; ant eaters are abundant. The natives know nothing about lions, elephants and hippopotamuses.

Some of the Indian tribes mummify the bodies of fellow tribesmen. They believe that the body of the dead contains an element that, if preserved, will insure his return to this world in a living form. They destroy the bodies of enemy captives so that there is no possibility of their reincarnation.

While hunting is the main means of supporting a native family in Africa, many Indians in the equatorial regions of South America are collectors of latex from the rubber trees and of other rare products of the tropical forest. Some of this latex (crude rubber) ultimately rolls over the roads of America in automobile tires, cushions the heels of American shoes, stops American bottles, and embraces a host of things in the form of rubber bands.

conditions should see an increase in such standard crops as licorice to flavor American chewing tobacco, olives, cotton, tobacco, and wheat.

Damascus Wants To Be Trade Door to Asia Once More

The country hopes to regain its ancient position as doorkeeper to Asia. That Damascus should recover the prestige that enabled it to stamp its name "damask" on silk and Damascus on fine steel, is out of the question. But the regular desert caravan, using American automobiles, that plies between Damascus and Baghdad on the Tigris and the regular air mail service from Cairo over Syria to Baghdad hint that the trade door of Syria is cracking open again.

Syria still has the lure of the unknown—unknown religions, undiscovered cities of the past, unexplored Crusader castles, unexcavated fortresses, secret societies, and little-known races.

For further information see: "Skirting the Shores of Sunrise," *National Geographic Magazine*, December, 1926; and "Syria: The Land Link of History's Chain," November, 1919.

Bulletin No. 3, October 13, 1930.

Photograph by De Cou from Galloway

LOADING A PROTESTING CAMEL IN SYRIA

While many a Syrian's wealth is still rated in the number of camels he owns, automobiles, railroads, and airplanes are gradually taking over the transportation needs of the country. American automobiles go back and forth between Damascus and Baghdad, providing regular service over the old caravan route over which luxuries of the orient destined for European markets poured into Damascus in the days before the discovery of America.

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The Garden of Bombay, Scene of Ghandi's March to the Sea

MONSOON rains are coming to an end so political agitation for a change in India's scheme of government is reawakening. Downpours that scattered paraders also turned the salt pans into mud puddles during the hot, moist summer months.

Agitation centers chiefly in the region called the Garden of Bombay through which the Indian leader Ghandi led his followers on a march of protest. The Garden of Bombay is the fertile plain that stretches north of Bombay between the mountains and the sea until it reaches the arid, super-heated Indian desert.

It is home to Ghandhi, who was born at Porbandar, a small port on the Kathiawar Peninsula. The march he made on foot he has made many times by train because he once was a lawyer in Bombay.

Craftsmen Draw Half Ounce of Silver into 2,000 Yards of Thread

The Garden of Bombay has remained a stronghold of the Hindus. While the Ganges Valley farther north offered a highroad to any conqueror who came through the Himalaya Mountains, the farm land of southwestern India was barricaded from mass invasion by the desert. Mohammedan rulers at Delhi did extend their power over the region. One, Ahmed, built the city named for him, Ahmadabad. The Parsis of Persia also came to southwestern India and have remained to become the Rockefellers and Morgans of Indian industry, but the bulk of the population is Hindu.

Ahmadabad, starting point of Ghandhi's march, is known as the "City of Dust," and with its name goes the reputation of being the dustiest city of India. Life within its ancient walls hangs by three threads: silk, cotton and gold. For centuries the chief industries of Ahmadabad have been the weaving of silk and cotton and gold brocade.

Craftsmen of the city still carry on the trade of spinning gold and silver thread for the rich fabrics so loved by the wealthy native rulers. Expert silversmiths draw half an ounce of silver into 2,000 yards of thread. Fashioning pottery, making elaborate betel nut boxes, and carving wood are also Ahmadabad specialties. The old-fashioned Indian looms have been replaced by modern steam power looms that make cloth from cotton grown on the black lands nearby. Ahmadabad is as close to cotton fields as Charlotte, North Carolina.

A City of Human Hives

Ahmadabad is a city of compartments; cells within a human hive. Some of the inclosed compartments or *pols* are small, having only five to ten houses; others have more houses swarming with as many as 10,000 inhabitants. But each ward or tenement court lives to itself; stout walls close it off from its neighbors. Usually the living quarters face a short private street with gates at each end opening on the public street. Within one compartment live only people of one caste or subdivision of a caste.

Baroda, second large city on the route of the famous march, is the capital of the native state of Baroda, and residence of the Gaekwar, one of the richest princes of India. One of his palaces has been set aside for his jewels and treasures, among which is reputed to be the 125-carat "Star of the South" diamond

Jivaros Shrink Human Heads to Size of Orange

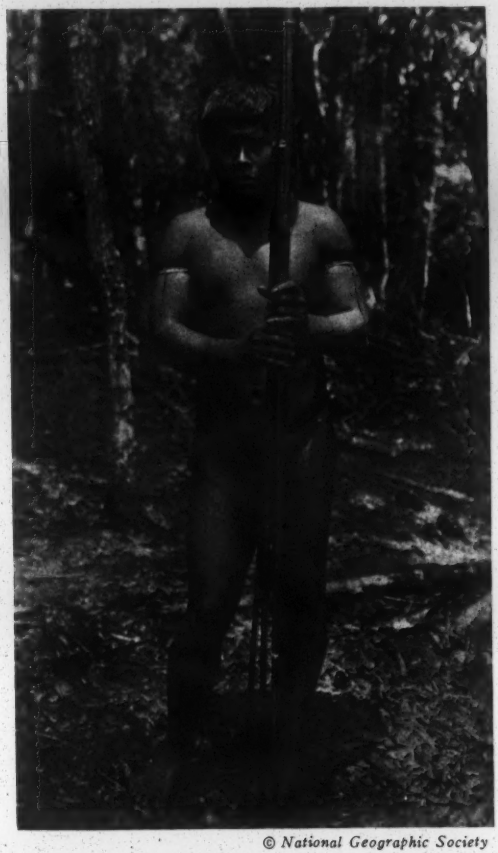
At the eastern base of the Andes, the equatorial traveler meet the Jivaros, natives who are proud of their art in shrinking human heads to the size of an orange, with the hair and skin intact.

From their hot jungle homes, the Jivaros can see the snow-capped Andes of Ecuador and western Brazil. Quito, capital of Ecuador, nestles in the Andean hills, about 15 miles south of the Equator.

The Equator begins its trans-Pacific "flight" by crossing the Galapagos Islands and then makes a long jump to the East Indies where it traverses Celebes, Dutch Borneo and Sumatra, missing Singapore, the nearest point of continental Asia, by only 90 miles. These regions are inhabited by brown-skinned natives, some of whom show traces of Malayan and Hindu blood.

From Sumatra westward, the Equator crosses no land until it strikes Kenya, East Africa.

Bulletin No. 4, October 13, 1930.



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HE LIVES NEAR THE EQUATOR IN BRAZIL

The shadow of a man standing at the Equator at noon on March 21 or September 21 falls around his feet in a circle. The sun at the moment is directly above him. A post planted upright on the Equator at such time on the two given days would throw no shadow at all.

and a large cloth embroidered with precious stones and seed pearls. His collection has been valued at $10,000,000.

Hedge-fenced fields along this region of the Garden of Bombay have reminded many foreigners of English countrysides. Cotton, wheat, tobacco, onions, carrots, poppies, sweet potatoes, ginger, tomatoes, mangoes, pineapples, melons, figs and many other fruits and vegetables thrive in the rich soil.

Surat, the Jamestown of India

Surat on this coast is the Jamestown of the English in India. The cornerstone of the first English trading post in India laid at Surat in 1613 was the cornerstone of the Indian Empire under the British flag. Following the English merchants came the Dutch and the French traders. Ornate, domed tombs larger than houses, erected in memory of early officials, show that Dutch and English agents wanted to compete for the community's esteem even after death. The town was taken over by the English Government in 1800.

Surat has dwindled in importance as Bombay and Ahmadabad have grown. One hundred and fifty years ago it was one of the chief ports of India, the town to which Europe looked for calicoes, silks and rich embroidery, pearls, rare stones, spices and lac. Now it is a sleepy port with a population of 100,000.

Bulletin No. 5, October 13, 1930.

A Gift to Education—How Teachers May Cooperate

THE GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS are a gift of the National Geographic Society to education. This is the first issue of 30 numbers, each containing five illustrated Bulletins, to be mailed weekly during the current school year. The Bulletins report the geography of recent events of world importance.

Because these Bulletins represent a substantial gift to schools from The Society's educational fund, the expense of advertising or circulation promotion cannot be undertaken as would be the case with a commercial publication. The Society must rely upon supervisory officials and teachers to call them to the attention of their colleagues who might use them effectively. This should be done promptly so that applicants may be put upon the mailing list to receive the early issues.

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Name.....

Address for sending Bulletins.....

City ..... State.....

I am a teacher in.....school.....grade

Many subscriptions expire with this issue. No further notice of expiration will be sent. Former subscribers are requested to renew promptly, otherwise files will be incomplete as back numbers cannot be supplied. Each request should be accompanied by 25 cents to cover mailing costs for the 30 issues of the school year.